



LAFAYETTE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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America Buckles Up Children

Lafayette teenagers and young adults are going to be surrounded with a strong message, "Buckle up; If you won't buckle up to save your life, then buckle up to save yourself a ticket," as the Lafayette Police Department, join more than 13,000 law-enforcement agencies in a nationwide crack down on seat belt violators. The message to teens and young adults will be seen and heard in television and radio ads, in Internet chat rooms, over public high school address systems, and through enforcement in locations where young people congregate-such as schools and sporting events.

The two-week enforcement wave, which runs from **May 24 through June 6**, will be supported by more than \$30 million in state and national advertising. It is based on a proven public health model to increase belt use called "**high visibility enforcement.**"

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 4,530

teens, ages 16-19, died and 320,000 more were injured in traffic crashes in 2002. Fatality rates for teens are twice that of older drivers and the risk of crashes for teens is four times that of older drivers. Two out of five deaths among teens are the result of a traffic crash. In 2002, the estimated economic impact of police-reported crashes involving drivers between 15 and 20 years old was \$32.8 billion.

While national seat belt use stands at 79 percent, we know the remaining 21 percent who don't wear their seat belts are disproportionately teens and young men ages 18-34. And that 69 percent, safety belt use for teens and young adults ages 16-24 continues to lag behind the rest of population.

During the national Operation ABC Mobilization, officers will intensify enforcement of safety belt laws and child passenger safety laws of this city and state. Remember, to fasten your seat belt and never drink before driving. **Spend the holidays with your families, not local law-enforcement.**